

1/14/70

Dear Paul- re Chicago Police Klan cell,

Yesterday, in speaking to a reporter friend, I asked him if he'd check his morgue on this for me. He said he would and just phoned back with the basic info. It is all from the AP or the LA Times service. I expect copies.

First story was 10/30/67, reported discovery of a Klan cell of six members inside the Department, named three besides the "ringleader", identified as Donald Heath, 30. He had been assigned to the Fillmore District (largely Negro), as also had been Richard Stanton, 33, and Jon Johansson, 26. Dennis Alsia had been assigned to the Austin District.

Heath had been relieved of duty 12/28. Stanton and Alsia resigned.

There is an April 6 story reporting "three former policemen" had been dismissed, Heath and William Plogger, 43, and Ernest Semet. The latter two are apparently those missing to make the six of the first story.

I recall other stories, including what Heath undoubtedly took to be defense of himself and the Klan, alleged patriotism, etc.

As of now, these aren't names that seem to fit what I've been working on and there is no indication it will. However, it is possible that collateral reporting may have significant other material.

If anyone can check into this in your local papers, which may have carried more, now that the dates are known, it might yield something. There was not likely an active Klan cell in the Chicops without their internal security people knowing it, unless it was just starting. As of now, I do not know what led to disclosure. I believe the time is close to a period of Bircher police recruitment.

The only names of the police involved in the Panther murders I've see so far are Fred Howard, William Kelley and Lynwood Harris (black). None means anything to me so far. From what I pick up on the pro-Bale Chicago radio, this thing is not going well for the police and a schism has already developed with one officer going to some lengths to get in a position where he could not be blamed for anything more than being there, even though it meant he had to contradict Groth, under oath.

Little appeared in the Washington Post about Lane's appearance in the conspiracy trial. That was very unfavorable to him and makes it look as though he was not helpful to the defendants. He was caught, on the stand, in his stock in trade, presenting other people's writing as his own - and in factual error. The Chicago radio (fortunately, denied the jury) leaned on his head with direct quotes. Apparently the prosecutor got him to admit that while he presented his book as his own "eyewitness" account, it was from other sources, including inaccurate news stories. In some places, his testimony contradicted his book. Too bad. According to radio, he even made the judge look reasonable. That is certainly no mean accomplishment!

Sincerely,

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